Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of modifying an antibiotic-producing strain of *Streptomyces coelicolor* ~~or *Streptomyces lividans*~~ to increase antibiotic production in said strain, the method comprising functionally deleting in said strain the *scbA* gene by introducing a deletion, stop codon or frameshift into the coding sequence of said gene.

2.-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Curently amended) A modified strain of *Streptomyces coelicolor* ~~or *Streptomyces lividans*~~, the modified strain having a functional deletion of the *scbA* gene, said functional deletion being effected by introducing a deletion, stop codon or frameshift into the coding sequence of said gene, whereby production of at least one antibiotic in said modified strain is increased compared to a wild-type strain of *Streptomyces coelicolor* ~~or *Streptomyces lividans*, respectively~~.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the strain is *S. coelicolor* A3(2) ~~or *S. lividans* 66~~.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently amended) The strain of claim 9, which is a modified strain of *S. coelicolor* A3(2) ~~or *S. lividans* 66~~.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A method for identifying *Streptomyces* species in which antibiotic production is increased by the functional deletion of the *scbA* gene of *S. coelicolor* or a homolog thereof, said scbA gene or said homolog having a nucleotide sequence which:

(a) is the complement of nucleotides 2142-1199 of SEQ ID NO: 19;

(b) encodes a polypeptide having at least 35% sequence identity with SEQ ID NO: 17; and/or

©) is capable of specific hybridization with the amplification product obtained using the primers:

oligo1 (5'-GACCACGT(CG)CC(CG)GGCATG; SEQ ID NO: 1) and

oligo2 (5'-GTCCTG(CG)TGGCC(CG)GT(CG)AC(CG)CG(CG)AC;

DO NOT ENTER K.Kerr 4/25/05